

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4-5, 8-17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29, 31-32, 34-35 and 43-48 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 10 are amended and claims 41 and 42 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter therein. Claims 43-48 are added. Support for the amendments to claims 1 and 10, and additional claims 43-48, may be found at least on page 38, line 23 to page 42, line 20 of the Specification, and in Figs. 16 and 17. No new matter is added by the above amendment. In view of at least the following, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

I. Claim Objection

The Office Action objects to claims 41 and 42 over informalities. These objections are respectfully traversed.

By this Amendment, claims 41 and 42 are canceled. Thus, the objections as to claims 41 and 42 are moot.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

II. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 4, 5, 8-15, 41 and 42 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,567,784 (Hirota) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,672,639 (Tanabe), in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,975,702 (Bazes), and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,553,104 (Takashi); rejects claims 16, 17, 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hirota, in view of Tanabe, in view of Bazes, in view of Takashi, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,517,155 (Yamauchi); rejects claims 22 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hirota, in view of Tanabe, in view of Bazes, in view of Takashi, in view of Yamauchi, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,796,360 (Wendelrup); rejects claims 25, 26, 31 and 32 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hirota, in view of Tanabe, in view of Bazes, in view of Takashi, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,477,181 (Fujimori); and rejects claims 28, 29, 34 and 35 under 35

U.S.C. §103(a) over Hirota, in view of Tanabe, in view of Bazes, in view of Takashi, in view of Fujimori, and further in view of Applicant's admitted prior art in the Background of the Invention of the Specification. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

By this Amendment, claims 41 and 42 are canceled. Thus, the objections as to claims 41 and 42 are moot.

Independent claim 1 recites, in part, "the oscillation circuit including: first to N-th inversion circuits that are connected serially; and first to N-th buffer circuits, an output of each of the first to N-th inversion circuits being connected to an input of a corresponding buffer circuit among the first to N-th buffer circuits, an output of an N-th inversion circuit among the first to N-th inversion circuits being connected to an input of a first inversion circuit among the first to N-th inversion circuits via a feedback line, the first to N-th inversion circuits being disposed along a first line that is parallel to the feedback line, the first to N-th buffer circuits being disposed along a second line that is parallel to the feedback line but differs from the first line, first to (N-1)th dummy lines and the feedback line being disposed in a region between the first to N-th inversion circuits and the first to N-th buffer circuits, each of the first to (N-1)th dummy lines being connected to an output of a corresponding inversion circuit among the first to (N-1)th inversion circuits and the feedback line being connected to the output of the N-th inversion circuit, each of the first to (N-1)th dummy lines having a parasitic capacitance that is substantially equal to the parasitic capacitance of the feedback line."

Independent claim 10 recites, in part, "the oscillation circuit including: first to N-th inversion circuits that are connected serially; and first to N-th buffer circuits, an output of each of the first to N-th inversion circuits being connected to an input of a corresponding buffer circuit among the first to N-th buffer circuits, an output of an N-th inversion circuit among the first to N-th inversion circuits being connected to an input of a first inversion

circuit among the first to N-th inversion circuits via a feedback line, the first to N-th inversion circuits being disposed along a first line that is parallel to the feedback line, the first to N-th buffer circuits being disposed along a second line that is parallel to the feedback line but differs from the first line, first to (N-1)th dummy lines and the feedback line being disposed in a region between the first to N-th inversion circuits and the first to N-th buffer circuits, each of the first to (N-1)th dummy lines being connected to an output of a corresponding inversion circuit among the first to (N-1)th inversion circuits and the feedback line being connected to the output of the N-th inversion circuit, each of the first to (N-1)th dummy lines having a parasitic capacitance that is substantially equal to a parasitic capacitance of the feedback line."

The Office Action relies on Takashi as disclosing an oscillation circuit that includes first to N-th inversion circuits and first to N-th buffer circuits. Although Fig. 18 of Takashi may show a circuit diagram, it fails to disclose a circuit layout. Thus, Takashi fails to disclose the first to (N-1)th dummy lines, each of the first to (N-1) dummy lines being connected to an output of a corresponding inversion circuit among the first to (N-1)th inversion circuits. Takashi also fails to disclose disposing the feedback line and the first to (N-1)th dummy lines in a region between the first to N-th inversion circuits and the first to N-th buffer circuits. Further, Takashi fails to disclose that each of the (N-1)th dummy lines has a parasitic capacitance that is substantially equal to the parasitic capacitance of the feedback line. The other applied references fail to cure these deficiencies of Takashi.

The applied references, in any combination, do not anticipate or render obvious at least the above-identified features. Therefore, the applied references, either individually or in combination, do not anticipate or render obvious the subject matter recited in claims 1 and 10.

Claims 4-5, 8-9, 11-17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29, 31-32 and 34-35 variously depend from claims 1 and 10. Because the applied references, in any combination, fail to

render the subject matter of independent claims 1 and 10 obvious, dependent claims 4-5, 8-9, 11-17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29, 31-32 and 34-35 are patentable for at least the reasons that claims 1 and 10 are patentable, as well as for the additional features recited.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

III. New Claims

By this Amendment, claims 43-48 are added. Claims 43-48 variously depend from independent claims 1 and 10. Thus, claims 43-48 are allowable for the same reasons that claims 1 and 10 are allowable as well as for the additional features they recite.

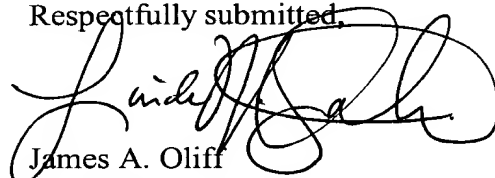
Accordingly, allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:

Request for Continued Examination (RCE)

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